

Revisiting the *Yingshe* Mode of Representation in *Supplement to Jiang Zong's Biography of a White Ape**

Jue Chen (Canterbury, New Zealand)

One of the three masterpieces of early Tang dynasty *chuanqi* .¹ *Supplement to Jiang Zong's*

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the Chinese version of roman a clef, produced in the medieval period.² The author of this *chuanqi* story remains anonymous.

A sketch of the story is as follows. Under the Liang dynasty (502–557), Ouyang He (538–570) went on an expedition, led by Lin Qin , to pacify the southern *Man* minority rebels during the final years of the Datong reign (535–546). In the mountainous deep south, a white ape that had magic powers kidnapped Ouyang He's wife. When she was eventually recovered, Ouyang's wife was pregnant. A year later she gave birth to a son. After a few years, Ouyang He was executed by the emperor, and his son was adopted by Jiang Zong (519–594), an influential literatus and politician of the time. When the boy grew up, he became a renowned calligrapher, and his fame brought much prestige to his family. The name of Ouyang He's son, either accidentally or deliberately, is not mentioned in the story.

The main point of the story is to insinuate that this boy was in fact not Ouyang He's son, but the son of Ouyang He's wife and a white ape.

History and fiction meet in the above account. Some details are historically true. Ouyang He, the protagonist, was indeed a historical figure of minor importance. His son, Ouyang Xun (557–641), was one of the greatest calligraphers of the early Tang period (618–712). Some of the information, however, is only partially true. Lin Qin, for instance, is most likely a name miswritten for Lan Qin , who led a southern expedition during the Datong reign. But at that time Ouyang He was a child of less than ten years old and could thus not have taken part in Lan Qin's expedition. In history, the person who accompanied Lan Qin was Ouyang Wei (498–563), Ouyang He's father.⁴

The title itself, *Supplement to Jiang Zong's Biography of a White Ape*, implies that Jiang Zong had written a *Biography of a White Ape*, and that the current story was written as a supplement to that original work. This strongly suggests that Jiang Zong, as the adoptive father and guardian of Ouyang Xun, knew who the boy's real father was and wrote a work

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1 The other two masterpieces of the early Tang *chuanqi* are *Record of an Ancient Mirror* (Gujing ji) and *Dalliance in the Immortal's Den* (You xianku).

2 For a detailed discussion of *yingshe*, see Jue Chen, "Shooting sand at people's shadow: *Yingshe* as a Mode of Representation in Medieval Chinese Literature," *Monumenta Serica* 47 (1999): 169–207.

3 See Jue Chen, "The Poetics of Historical Referentiality: An Outline," *Tamkang Review* 27.2 (1997): 1–64.

4 For a detailed discussion, see Jue Chen, "Calculated Anachronisms and Intertextual Echoes in 'Bu Jiang Zong boyuan [baiyuan] zhuan,'" *Tang Studies*, 14 (1996): 67–97.

to record the fact. However, historians believe that Jiang Zong's so-called *Biography of a White Ape* never existed. This would mean the anonymous author of *Supplement* had created the whole thing.

Rather than recording historical facts, the author's purpose was obviously to launch a personal attack on Ouyang Xun, implying that his biological father was an animal. In order to achieve this he has distorted and manipulated events. The center of these distortions and manipulations is the image of the white ape, which has a strong Taoist flavor. The story's backdrop and the ape's behavior indicate that he was in fact a Taoist practitioner in animal form.

This paper will focus on the image of this white ape, and analyze the relationship between this image and the real life story of Ouyang Xun. Based on this analysis, I will then revisit the *yingshe* mode of representation illustrated in *Supplement to Jiang Zong's Biography of a White Ape* in terms of the political and cultural environment of the late seventh century.

I. The Taoist Mountain Utopia

Very few literary critics have observed that the residence of the white ape resembles a typical Taoist mountain utopia. In the story, the place where the white ape lives is described as follows:

...
... ..

[A] magnificent mountain to the south which was so richly verdant that it distinguished itself from other mountains ... [The foot of the mountain] was surrounded by a deep brook ... The top [of the peak] was lined with fine trees and ornamented with rare kinds of beautiful flowers. The green lawn underfoot was as rich and soft as a carpet. Everything was fresh, quiet, and different. The place was just like another world.⁵ To the east, there was a stone arch ... [when Ouyang He] went through the wooden gate of the arch ... there were three huge places resembling halls in the human world. ... This mountain is a very reclusive place where no human being has ever come. Looking upward, one never sees any woodcutters; looking downward, one sees lots of tigers, wolves, and other monstrous beasts.⁶

5 Uchiyama Chinari 内山 辰巳 insightfully points out that one of the basic linguistic patterns in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyan zhuan* is the use of four-character phrases (*sizju* 四字句), see Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tō shōsetsu kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kikuragesha, 1977), p. 160. I would further argue that this is especially true in the passage that describes the utopia where the white ape lives – the four-character phrase structure serves as a linguistic backbone here (*jiashuliezhi jianyinghua qixialin fengruanritan qingjiongrenji miaoranshuying* 加失鹿之建映花奇穴林丰润日潭清境人集妙奥然生映). I also strongly suspect that the use of this four-character linguistic pattern in describing a Taoist utopia is derived from Taoist classics, because the same pattern is so frequently seen in these classics when a utopia is described. For instance, in *Huanghezhai shizhou sandao badiji* 黄河寨时州三岛八地记 from *Hanfenge chongyin Zhengtong Daozang* 含汾阁冲隐正统道藏 (hereafter DZ), in order to give a full description of the island utopia of *shizhou* 时州 and *sandao* 三岛, a similar four-character pattern is used (*jintuyang yinghubuie xiaiyunmei zhunian'ersheng bi'oubingtao sandongjieshi qibuyiguo sijifurong* 金涂阳映湖不违下彩云梅准年二生比不甍滔三洞接世奇不壹国四集符融), see DZ 32:291. In this

sense we can even say that the overall linguistic structure of the story here is derivational.

6 Translations of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyan zhuan* throughout the paper are all mine. For a complete translation, see Jue Chen (trans.), "A Supplement to Jiang Zong's Biography of a White Ape," *Renditions* 49 (1998): 76-85. The Chinese text was preserved in *Taiping guangji* 太平广记, and the version I based my translation upon was taken from Wang Pijiang's 王季江 *Tangren xiaoshuo* 唐人小说 (Shanghai: Shen Zhou guo guang, 1932), pp. 19-23.

Everything in the backdrop of this fictitious world – the mountain, the brook, the fine trees, the rare flowers, the freshness, the quietness, and especially the stone chamber (*shishi* 石室)⁷ – suggests that this is a typical “immortal’s domain” (*xianjing* 仙境) from accounts of anomalies (*zhiguai* 志怪), which was shared by both literati and Taoists in the Six Dynasties (222–589).⁸ Typically, an immortal’s domain was uncovered by chance by an outsider (like Ouyang He in this story), who eventually made its existence known to human society.⁹

The backdrop of our story not only resembles a typical situation of *xianjing* in the Six Dynasties’ accounts of anomalies, but also carries a strong flavor of a typical Taoist mountain-grotto utopia (*dongtian fudi* 洞天福地).¹⁰ The latter concept was developed during the Six Dynasties (especially during the Liang)¹¹ and fully established in the early Tang,¹² whose upper limit roughly parallels our story’s historical span, while its lower limit corresponds to the date of the story’s composition.¹³

A typical Taoist mountain utopia was usually located near a brook or a stream.¹⁴ In the heart of the mountain there was often a cave with stone chambers. Around this cave were generally medicinal gardens, fruit plantations, fine trees, strange and potent herbs, clear ponds, and fragrant flowers.¹⁵ Inside the cave were stone beds (*shichuang* 石床), stone tables

7 A thatched hut (*jinglu* 精庐, and the stone chamber serves as a later variation) played a significant role in the Taoist practice of longevity starting in the Eastern Han (25–220) when *Taiping jing* 太平經 was produced. See Thomas Hahn, “The Standard Taoist Mountain and Related Features of Religious Geography,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989–1990), p. 146; and Miyakawa Hisayuki’s “Tenchi sui sankyū to dōten” 天竺の仙境と洞天, *Tōhō Shūkyō* 78 (1991), pp. 1–22. During the Northern Zhou dynasty (557–581), a trans-regional system of thirty-six “thatched huts” was established by the Celestial Master Taoism (*Tianshi dao* 天师道), see Thomas Hahn, p. 146 and Miura Kunio “Dōten fukuchi shōron” 洞天福地小論, *Tōhō Shūkyō* 61 (1983), p. 2. This system parallels the thirty-six grotto-heaven (*dongtian* 洞天) system which was established in the same period, mainly related to the Mao Shan 茅山 Taoism, see also Miura Kunio, pp. 4–5.

8 The literal translation of *xianjing* is “immortal’s domain.” *Shuying* 述异记 in traditional Chinese language is equivalent to *xianjing* in most senses. Various descriptions of *xianjing* in the “accounts of anomalies” tradition can be regarded as part of the Taoist ideological establishment of the time. Many Tang dynasty (618–907) and Five Dynasties (907–960) *xianjing* stories were recorded in *Taiping guangji*, and some of them were also incorporated into the Taoist canon, such as in *Yunji qiqian* 云笈七签, see DZ 74-77:677-702; in *Sandong qunxianlu* 三洞群仙录, see DZ 108:992-995; and in *Lishi zhengxian tidaotongjian* 历世真仙体道通记, see DZ 15-16:139-148. For details, see Wang Guoliang 王桂良, “Tang Wudai de xianjing chuanshuo” 唐五代仙经传说, *Tangdai wencue yanjiu* 唐代文学研究 3 (1992), pp. 615–630.

9 This accidental invader was usually a woodcutter or a fisherman in the Six Dynasties’ accounts of anomalies. The sentence quoted above – “one never sees any woodcutters” – draws on this tradition.

10 The literal translation for *dongtian* is “grotto-heaven” and for *fudi* is “blissful realm” or “blessed plot.”

11 The concept of *dongtian fudi* was developed during the Six Dynasties period. Various versions of this concept can be found in both literary texts and Taoist scriptures such as Tao Yuanming’s (365–427) *Taohuayuan ji* 桃花源记, Sun Chuo’s (314–371) *You Tiantaishan fu* 游天台山赋, Ge Hong’s (284–364) *Baopu zi* 抱朴子, and Tao Hongjing’s (456–536) *Zhengao* 真经. For a detailed discussion, see Miura Kunio, pp. 4–6.

12 With the composition and circulation of Sima Chengzhen’s (647?–735) *Tiandi gongfu tu* 天地工夫图 between the early Tang and the high Tang, the theory of the mountain-grotto utopia (*dongtian fudi shuo* 洞天福地说) was completed. Cf. Miura Kunio, pp. 1–4.

13 In my opinion, this story was probably composed toward the end of the seventh century under Empress Wu’s reign.

14 Perhaps this design is related to an early Taoist concept of three major universal elements: heaven, earth and water (*tian di ren sanguan* 天地人三关). For a detailed discussion of these elements, see Miyakawa Hisayuki, pp. 1–22. Elements in the above description do remind us of elements in the backdrop of our story’s fictitious world.

15 Here I borrowed Thomas Hahn’s description of typical components for a *fudi*, see Thomas Hahn, p. 150, n. 21.

and chairs and sometimes a treasure hall (*tang* 堂),¹⁶ as in the Linwu cave (*linwudong* 林屋洞), the ninth grotto-heaven in the Taoist sacred geographical system.¹⁷

The mountain-grotto utopia provided a special environment for Taoists to practise the principles contained in their secret manuals of longevity. The design of this environment duly reflected a sophisticated Taoist theory of the three-layer universe, which was formed in the Six Dynasties in general and during the Liang dynasty in particular.¹⁸ According to this theory, the universe is a huge cave, the mountain-grotto utopia is a smaller cave, and the human body the smallest cave.¹⁹ These three cave universes constitute a triple-layer world of interdependence and “by manipulating one of these realities, the adept can reach and influence an analogous reality in another realm.”²⁰ This theory served as a core idea in the mountain-grotto utopia ideology.²¹

During the formative period of this core idea (between the Datong 大同 and Datong 大同 reigns of Emperor Wu 吳 of the Liang dynasty),²² the “Canopy Heaven” theory (*gaitian shuo* 蓋天說) of the universe briefly prevailed over the “Enveloping Sky” theory (*huntian shuo* 渾天說).²³ Its dominance roughly corresponded to the period in which Lan Qin’s southern expeditions took place.

In contrast to its counterpart, the “Enveloping Sky” theory, the “Canopy Heaven” theory took the universe as a self-contained cave.²⁴ This “grottofication” of the universe produced the belief that the cave was “the heart of the mountain, the very fountain of the *qi* [氣, pneuma] energies of the earth,” from which many Taoists “nourished their vital essence” for longevity.²⁵ It also produced an imaginative anatomical theory asserting that

16 There are stone beds and halls in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*; see the above quote.

17 The Linwu cave was a typical Tang dynasty mountain-grotto utopia. The treasure hall in Linwu cave was called Gefandong 葛方洞. For details, see Thomas Hahn, p. 152. For a more elaborate discussion about the grotto-heaven *xianjing* exemplified by the Linwu cave, see Stephen Bokenkamp, “The Peach Flower Font and the Grotto Passage,” *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 106.1 (1986), pp. 65-77.

18 Miura Kunio, pp. 8-15.

19 For a detailed description of this theory and its relevance to the Liang dynasty intellectual atmosphere, see Miura Kunio, pp. 12-17.

20 See Anna Seidel, “Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950–1990,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989–1990), p. 249.

21 “Man and world,” asserted Henri Maspéro, “for the Chinese, are absolutely identical, not only as a whole but also in every detail. Man’s head is round like heaven, his feet are rectangular like the earth; his Five Viscera correspond to the Five Elements, his twenty-four vertebrae to the twenty-four solar half-months of the year, and the twelve segments of the tracheal artery to the twelve lunar months; his 365 bones to the 365 days of the year; his veins and the blood they contain to rivers and streams; and so on.” See Henri Maspéro, *Le Taoïsme et les religions chinoises* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), pp. 373-374; and its English translation, *Taoism and Chinese Religion* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), pp. 339-340 (Hereafter, I will cite only from the English translation, by F. A. Kierman, Jr.).

22 See Yamada Keiji, “Ryō Bu no gaitensetsu” 梁武の蓋天說, *Tōbō Gakubō* (1975), pp. 123-125.

23 The translations of *gaitian* and *huntian* are borrowed from Edward Schafer; see his *Pacing the Void: Tang Approaches to the Stars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 35. For a detailed discussion about the success of the *gaitian* theory during the Liang dynasty, see Yamada Keiji, pp. 98-134. For general discussions of the *gaitian* and *huntian* theories, see Liu Zhaomin, *Zhonghua tianwen xue fazhan shi* (Taipei: Commercial Press, 1985), pp. 445-471; Chen Zungui, *Zhongguo tianwen xue shi* vol. 6 (Taipei: Minwen shuju, 1990), pp. 1827-1845; and Xuan Huancan, *Tianwen xue shi* (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992), pp. 64-78.

24 Miura Kunio, pp. 12-14.

25 Thomas Hahn, p. 147.

the *qi* traveled in the human body through some predetermined routes in the same way it travels in a cave. This theory matured during the Six Dynasties, crystallizing in Tao Hongjing's *Dengzhen yinjue* ,²⁶ also written during Emperor Wu's reign in the Liang dynasty.²⁷

This analysis tries to put the backdrop of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhu* in its due intellectual context.

II. The Theory of Three Cinnabar Fields and the Practice of *Qigong*

In the story, the white ape's body is as hard as iron and weapons cannot hurt him. However, he has one point, several *cun* (Chinese inches) below his navel,²⁸ where he is vulnerable to knives and swords (*bianti jietie weiqixiaishucun changhubizhi cibibuneng yubingren*). This phenomenon reflects a key concept in the age-old tradition of Chinese *qigong* ²⁹ (especially in its martial arts branch), which is called *lianmen* (the gate of exercise).³⁰ A *qigong* master can make his entire body as hard as iron by training his inner breath to circulate around an internal route (*jingluo*). But there always remains one vulnerable point serving as the “opening” of the breathing exercise (*qikou*) that is necessary for the *qigong* practice.³¹ No master can fill this gap until he becomes an immortal.

The location of the white ape's *lianmen* is related to another important concept in the Six Dynasties Highest Clarity Taoism (*shangqing pai*) – the concept of Three Cinnabar Fields (*dantian*).³² This was established in the Jin dynasty (265–420) when *Huangting jing* ³³ (The Book of the Yellow Court) first appeared.³⁴ According to *Huangting jing*, Cinnabar Fields are places of generation, and various kinds of micro-gods (*zhenren chizi*) reside

26 DZ 22:193.

27 See also Miura Kunio, pp. 14–15.

28 See also notes 32 and 36.

29 One possible translation of *qigong* is “the work of the *qi*,” see *The Taoist Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 132 (this is Karen C. Duval's English translation of Schipper's *Le corps taoïste*, 1982).

30 Since I have found no satisfactory translation for *lianmen*, the one I have used here is offered only tentatively. I have not yet been able to locate the earliest documentation of *lianmen* in Chinese sources. However, *lianmen* appears so frequently in later Chinese novels of martial arts (*wuxia xiaoshuo*) that it becomes a commonplace for the Chinese audience.

31 In traditional Chinese novels of martial arts, *lianmen* can be almost any part of the body, for instance, top of the head, throat, or underside of the foot.

32 The translation here is borrowed from F. A. Kierman's translation of Henri Maspéro, who has also offered a concise explanation of the concept: “The body is divided into three sections: the upper section (head and arms), the middle section (chest), lower section (belly and legs). Each of these has its vital center, a sort of command post; these are the three Cinnabar Fields, (so called because cinnabar is the essential ingredient for the drug of immortality): the first, the Palace of Ni-huan (a term derived from the Sanskrit word Nirvâna) is in the brain; the second, the Scarlet Palace, is near the heart; the third, the Lower Cinnabar Field, is below the navel.” See Maspéro, 1981, p. 268.

33 The translation is borrowed from Maspéro, 1981, p. 341.

34 For the dates of composition and early circulation of *Huangting jing*, see Kristofer Schipper, *Concordance du Houang-t'ing king: Nei-king et Wai-king* (Paris: École Française d'Extrême-orient, 1975), pp. 1–11; and Wang Ming, “Huangting jing kao” in his *Daojia he daojiao sixiang yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1984), pp. 324–371.

there.³⁵ The position of the Lower Cinnabar is several *cun* under the navel.³⁶ When one kills the gods who reside there, one kills the man, just as Ouyang He killed the white ape in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*.³⁷

For these pre-Tang Taoist practitioners, the circulation of breath was “the technique of immortality,”³⁸ and the Lower Cinnabar Field served as the most crucial spot. The breath “descends from the nose (the Long Valley) to the kidneys (the Dark District) and traverses the Five Viscera (the Suburbs) and the Six Receptacles (the Countryside)” and then goes through the Origin of the Barrier (*guanyuan* 關元) down to the Lower Cinnabar, from where the *qi* begins to travel back to the Upper Cinnabar.³⁹ The above concept is important for our understanding of the story. In addition to other signs – such as the white ape’s age and his human abilities⁴⁰ – the position of his *lianmen* alone confirms that the white ape in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* is a Taoist *qigong* practitioner of longevity.

From the Six Dynasties through to the Tang, Taoists also engaged in the technique of “Avoiding Creaals” (*bigu* 辟穀) to achieve longevity.⁴¹ In this theory, there are Three Worms or Corpses (*sanshi* 三尸) residing in everyone’s Three Cinnabar Fields. Not only do these Worms “directly cause decrepitude and death by attacking the Cinnabar Fields, but they also try to shorten the time of life allotted to the man in whom they lodge,” because as soon as the man dies, these Worms are freed.⁴² It is “with the Essence of Cereals that the Three Worms are born and nourished.”⁴³ When the cereals were cut off, these Worms would be gradually destroyed. This served as the main reason for the practice of Taoist fasting, which complemented other Taoist longevity practices.

35 For Cinnabar Fields as places of generation, see Kristofer Schipper, 1993, p. 133. In addition to the *Huangting jing* sources, Ge Hong’s *Baopu zi* also confirms that there are gods residing in Cinnabar Fields, see Wang Ming, *Baopu zi neipian jiaoshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), p. 296. Henri Maspéro offers a concise description of this belief as follows: “The human body is indeed a world (microcosm) like the exterior world, that of Heaven and Earth as the Chinese say (macrocosm). And it too is peopled with divinities.” See Maspéro, 1981, p. 268.

36 According to the most popular theory supported by *Huangting jing*, the Lower Cinnabar is three *cun* under the navel. However, there are other theories claiming that the place is either one *cun* or two *cun* or two *cun* and four *fen* (one *cun* equals ten *fen*), respectively, under the navel. For instance, Ge Hong believes that the Lower Cinnabar is two *cun* and four *fen* under the navel, see Wang Ming, 1980, p. 296.

37 According to *Huangting jing*: “(The area situated) three inches below the Cinnabar Field (is) the dwelling of a god” (*tianxia sancun shensuoju* 天下三寸神所居), cited in Maspéro, 1981, p. 493. According to the Taoist multi-level logic, one may take the white ape’s body as a universe. By killing the god dwelling in the ape’s Lower Cinnabar Field, one certainly killed the ape. One may also take the mountain-grotto utopia as a universe, in which case the god who dwelled in the cave-cinnabar field was in turn the white ape. Ouyang He’s killing of the white ape therefore gains an allegorical layer of meaning.

38 See Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 339.

39 Ibid., pp. 341-342.

40 The white ape was one thousand years old and he learned to speak human language as well as to read Taoist talismanic texts. Transforming into human shape and gaining human abilities such as speaking and reading were important stages for an animal Taoist practising longevity principles. Many interesting examples can be seen in later masterworks of Chinese fiction, for instance, *Xijou ji* 西遊記 (The Journey to the West).

41 The translation is borrowed from Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 333. For studies of *bigu* in Western language, see Jean Levi, “L’abstinence de céréales chez les taoïstes,” *Etudes chinoises* 1 (1983), pp. 3-47.

42 Maspéro, 1981, p. 269. It is also possible to reason that when Ouyang He stabbed the white ape under his Lower Cinnabar, its Worm was freed.

43 Ibid.

In the story the white ape loves “fruits and nuts” (*xidan guoli* 息丹果力) but does “not drink and eat regularly” (*yinshi wuchang* Yinshi 无常), which could be interpreted as signs of practicing “Avoidance of Cereals.” However, the fact that the white ape especially likes to eat dogs (*youshi quan* 有食犬) seems to contradict this theory, since dogs were probably considered delicacies in the human diet at the time.

My interpretation of this ambiguous situation is that the white ape follows the practice of “Avoidance of Cereals” only partially, revealing the inner struggle between the nature of an animal and the principles of a Taoist practitioner.

There were four main Taoist longevity practices popular from the Six Dynasties through to the Tang: the “Taking Drugs” (*fushi* 服食),⁴⁴ the “Avoidance of Cereals,” the “Guiding of Breath” (*xingqi* 行氣 or *daoyin* 導引)⁴⁵ and the “Inner Chamber” (*fangzhong* 房中).⁴⁶ The first one was later regarded as the “Outer Alchemy” (*waidan* 外丹) tradition while the other three were considered to be mainly in the “Inner Alchemy” (*neidan* 內丹) tradition.⁴⁷ In *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* the white ape practised all methods except the first one. Therefore, I suspect he was an early practitioner of Taoist “Inner Alchemy.”⁴⁸

III. The Secret of Taoist Inner Chamber Arts of Longevity

The white ape in the story is one thousand years old and has sexual intercourse with some thirty women every night. All the evidence points to the fact that he is practising the Taoist secret inner chamber arts (*fangzhong shu* 房中術)⁴⁹ for longevity rather than simply indulging in sensual gratification.

We read from the story that the ape “had enjoyed the women in the practice of *bucai* to benefit only himself and had no accomplices” (*bucai weizhi qishen geng wu danglei* 不才未止七身更無當類). *Bucai* is a critical term in the Taoist inner chamber arts of longevity,⁵⁰ signifying the

44 *Fushi* was the only practice of the major four that the white ape did not follow.

45 The translation is borrowed from Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 283. *Xingqi* is a kind of Taoist *Qigong*.

46 The next section will be devoted to a detailed discussion of *fangzhong*. Scholars distinguish among three groups of *fangshu* (esoteric arts) of the pre-Qin period (before 221 BC), namely *xingqi*, *fushi* and *fangzhong*. The *xingqi* group was represented by Peng Zu 彭祖, Wang Qiao 王喬 and *Chisong Zi* 赤松子, and flourished in the areas of Ba 巴 and Shu 蜀. The *fushi* group, headed by An Qisheng 安期生, was popular in the areas of Qi 齊 and Lu 魯. The *fangzhong* group was led by Rongchen Zi 容成子, and active in the central Qin area 秦. The later Taoist longevity principles followed these categories of *fangshu* to a certain extent, see Wang Ming, 1980, p. 103. We should also notice that there are interactions among these categories, for instance, Peng Zu is regarded as a master of the *daoyin* tradition and is also taken to be the patriarch of the *fangzhong* tradition. See Sakade Yoshinobu 阪出祥伸, *Dōkyō to yōjō shisō* 道教と養生思想 (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1992), pp. 23-105.

47 Henri Maspéro’s translator uses “Interior Cinnabar” to translate *neidan*, see Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 345. Here I follow the more popular translation of “inner alchemy.”

48 According to Tang dynasty Taoist ideology the *neidan* practitioner gained longevity while the *waidan* practitioner ascended to the heaven (*younaidanzhe keyijannian denvaidanzhe keyishengtian* 有內丹者可紀延年 登外丹者可紀升天), see *Sangdong xindan jingjue* 桑東心丹經訣, which was supposed to be produced under the Tang dynasty. See DZ 66:600.

49 For a general discussion about the history of Chinese chamber arts (both Taoist and non-Taoist) see R. H. van Gulik’s *Sexual Life in Ancient China: A Preliminary Survey of Chinese Sex and Society* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1961).

50 *Bucai* or *caibu* 不才 or *caizhan* 才戰 is frequently used in Taoist writings as well as Chinese fictional writings after the Song dynasty. Cf. Catherine Despeux’s *Immortelles de la Chine ancienne* (Puisseaux: Pardes, 1990), pp. 225-226. But because no pre-Tang sources are readily available, I am unable to provide detailed information on the early history of the term.

male partner's use of a series of complicated techniques to extract the Essence of Life from the female partner so as to prolong his life span.⁵¹ This method can be practised either alone or with accomplices (*you* 有).⁵²

From the pre-Qin to the Western Han dynasty (206 BC–24 AD), the inner chamber arts were a kind of *fangshu*. Beginning with the establishment of Celestial Master Taoism (known also as *wudoumi dao* 五斗米道) during the reign of Emperor Shun (r. 125–144) of the Eastern Han dynasty,⁵³ the inner chamber arts were incorporated into Taoism. During the Six Dynasties, Taoist inner chamber arts developed in most of the major Taoist sects, especially Highest Clarity Taoism.⁵⁴ Before this, the inner chamber arts were mainly transmitted orally from the master to the disciple, but from this time it began to be recorded officially in Taoist writings for more people to share.⁵⁵ *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuàn* was right set in Emperor Wu's reign of the Liang dynasty, when the inner chamber arts were promoted by Highest Clarity Taoism.

During the early-Tang period, in which *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuàn* was probably written,⁵⁶ the inner chamber arts were practised not only by Taoists but also more extensively among doctors, literati, and officials.

Sun Simiao's (581–682) monumental works on Chinese medicine,⁵⁷ *Qianjin yaofang* and *Qianjin yifang*, both devoted considerable space to the inner chamber arts in the section on Nourishing the Vital Principle (*yangxing* 養性).⁵⁸ In the hands of eminent early Tang dynasty doctors the Taoist secret chamber practice of longevity became a special

51 It is important to understand that 1) *aibu* is part of the Taoist *fangzhong shu* but not all Taoist *fangzhong shu* are involved in the technique of *aibu*; 2) Taoist *fangzhong shu* is part of *fangzhong shu* but not all *fangzhong shu* are necessarily Taoist; 3) *aibu* is a special technique that may or may not exist in the pre-Taoist *fangzhong shu* but it definitely exists in Taoist *fangzhong shu*.

52 For instance, according to Chen Tuan's (c. 989) *Fangshu xuanji* (Taiwan: photographic edition with no dates of publication available), the fifth requirement of inner chamber arts is choosing accomplices (*jieyou* 接友), see p. 4.

53 The chamber arts played an important role in Celestial Master Taoism for about three hundred years, starting from its patriarch Zhang Ling until the Northern Wei dynasty (386–534) when Kou Qianzhi (365–448) reformed Celestial Master Taoism in 415. See "Shilao zhi" of *Weishu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 1974, and hereafter WS) 8:114:3049-3054. Cf. Ren Jiyu's *Zhongguo daojiao shi* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin, 1990), p. 202.

54 Tao Hongjing's "Yunü sunyipian" chapter in *Yangxing yanminglu* serves as one of the earliest written treatments of the Taoist inner chamber arts in Tao's time. See DZ 62:572.

55 Oral transmission as the only way of passing the secrets of inner chamber arts from one generation to another was described by Ge Hong in *Baopu zi (cifa nai zhenren koukou xianghuan benbushuye suifumingyao erfubuzhuizhao yibudechangshengye)*, see Wang Ming, 1980, p. 137. The Celestial Master Taoism also does not have any extant written manual for chamber arts.

56 Most *chuanqi* critics believe that *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuàn* was written during the early Tang. Personally, I suspect that it was done under the reigns of Empress Wu (r. 684–704). My reasons will be given later in this paper.

57 In addition to Sun's monumental works, the Tang Dynasty Wang Tao's *Waitai mijiao*, completed in 752, also deals with the chamber arts. See *Waitai mijiao* (Beijing: Renmin weisheng chubanshe, 1955) pp. 459-460.

58 In Sun Simiao's "Yangxing" section of *Qianjin yaofang*, see DZ 87-89:800-820. The translation of *yangxing* is borrowed from Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 36.

medical treatment (*yangsheng fa* 養生法), helping to prolong the natural life-spans of their patients and patrons.⁵⁹

Bo Xingjian's (776–826) *Tiandi yinyang jiaohuan dalefu* 天地陰陽交媾大略, which was preserved in the Dunhuang 莫高窟 caves and remained undiscovered for many centuries, is a persuasive illustration of the popularity of inner chamber arts within the circle of Tang dynasty literati.⁶⁰ Under these circumstances it is quite possible that the anonymous author of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* could have gained enough knowledge of Taoist inner chamber arts to deal with them accurately in the story without belonging to any of the known Taoist orders.

The description of inner chamber arts in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* is remarkably close to the Six Dynasties Taoist rules of practice. According to *Yufang mijue* 玉房秘訣, ⁶¹ the female partner of a Taoist inner chamber arts practitioner should be “young,”⁶² with smooth skin and black hair, and have a soft voice.⁶³ In the story, after the white ape is killed, Ouyang He searches the ape's treasures and finds “three dozen women, all extraordinarily beautiful” (*furen sanshibei jiejuqise* 婦人三十輩皆絕其色). These women tell Ouyang He that whenever one of them becomes old she is taken away to a place none of them knows. This is identical to the fate of female partners in the Taoist sources described above.

According to Tao Hongjing, if an inner chamber arts practitioner was able to have intercourse with twelve women in one night, he would look very young even when he became an old man. And if he could have intercourse with ninety-three women in one night, he would live for ten thousand years.⁶⁴ The white ape has “three dozen women,” and he goes to “all the beds making love with the women every night” (*yejin zhuchuangniaoxi yixijiezhou* 夜盡諸床媾交一夕接周).

As a result, he has lived for one thousand years. This is a vivid illustration of Tao Hongjing's rule: three dozen falls between twelve and ninety-three, and the ape's age, one thousand, falls between one hundred and ten thousand.⁶⁵

“Trying to have a son” (*qinzi* 勤子) was an important component of Taoist inner chamber arts from the Six Dynasties through to the Tang. In order to produce a clever son who would enjoy good luck, the male practitioner had to ejaculate on a certain day (*yuexiu* 月脩), according to the Taoist theory of inner chamber arts. Tao Hongjing cited a relatively short list of these

59 I believe that this phenomenon – *fangzhong shu* as medical treatment – existed mainly from the Han through the Tang. After the Tang, the inner chamber arts were not discussed much as a means of medical treatment in the history of Chinese medicine.

60 The original, numbered as P 2539, is now kept in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. For an English summary of the piece, see R. H. van Gulik's *Erotic Colour Prints of the Ming Period* (Tokyo: Privately-printed edition, 1951), pp. 90-94; for an annotated English translation, see Gulik, 1961, pp. 203-208. For discussions about this piece, see Ye Dehui's (1864–1927) postface to his *Shuangmei jing'an congshu* 雙梅鏡暗叢書 (Changsha: Yeshe, 1907); and Jiang Xiaoyuan's “Tiandi yinyang jiaohuan dalefu fawei” 天地陰陽交媾大略發微, *Chinese Studies* 9.1 (1991), pp. 273-283.

61 *Yufang mijue* is recorded in “Jingji zhi” of *Suishu* 隋書 as “medical prescriptions” (*yifang* 醫方), see *Suishu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973, and hereafter SS) 4:34:1043.

62 The best age for female partners is between fourteen and nineteen, and no older than thirty.

63 See *Yufang mijue* (Taiwan photographic edition with not dates of publication available), p. 7.

64 See DZ 62:572.

65 From the wording of *Huangting jing*, it seems that the following is a common belief of the time: intercourse with twelve women makes an old man look young. The upper limit of the life-span of ordinary people is approximately one hundred years.

days,⁶⁶ while Sun Simiao offered a very long list, including all the *yuexiu* days in each month.⁶⁷ In the story the white ape eventually has a son conceived by Ouyang He's wife, and he is sure this boy will "meet a sage emperor and honour his family and ancestors" (*jiangfeng shengdi bida qizong*). I strongly suspect that the white ape makes sure he has his son conceived on one of these *yuexiu* days.

The Taoist inner chamber arts, especially during the Six Dynasties, were regarded as esoteric techniques. They were often practised together with other longevity methods, especially the *xingqi* method, in a Taoist mountain utopia.⁶⁸ In the story the white ape practised the inner chamber arts as well as *xingqi*⁶⁹ in his mountain utopia, and he "often read books made of wooden slips." The characters in these books look like "Taoist talisman seal characters, and none of us [his women] could recognize them" (*ziruofuzhuan liaobukeshi*). I suspect that some of the ape's books may well be secret manuals for Taoist chamber arts.

IV. The Critical Moment of Noon

In the story the white ape always leaves home a few minutes after noon (*rizhong* or *wushi*);

After the hour of twelve noon, the white ape would suddenly disappear. Each afternoon, he would journey several thousand *li* but would return just as dusk was falling.

Why is noon so important? This is a question that *chuanqi* critics have not yet explored.

Generally speaking, noon was a critical moment in the ancient Chinese mind, especially in Buddhism and Taoism from the Six Dynasties to the Tang dynasty. Yoshikawa Tadao's study on the general meaning of noon⁷⁰ provides us with a springboard. According to Yoshikawa Tadao, the issue of noon was first seriously raised under the Liu Song dynasty (420–479), which sponsored a debate about whether Buddhism or Taoism was superior and whether India or China was the center of the world.⁷¹ The group arguing for India presented the following evidence: in India, at noon on the Summer Solstice (*xiazhi*), there exists no shadow (*fangzhong wuying*). This was offered as a sign of a superior culture.⁷²

66 See DZ 62:572.

67 See DZ 87-89:800-820.

68 To select the right place for practising the inner chamber arts is extremely significant for Taoists. The Taoist mountain utopia is of course the best place. Tao Hongjing listed many places that are improper and warned all practitioners to avoid these forbidden areas (*diji*).

69 See analysis above.

70 Yoshikawa Tadao, "Nitchū mui – Shikaisen kô" – , in *Chūgoku ko-Dōkyō shi kenkyū* 中国古道教史研究. Ed. Yoshikawa (Kyoto: Dōhōsha Shuppan 1992), pp. 175-216

71 Ibid.

72 The Summer Solstice is the tenth of the Twenty-four Solar Terms. For a famous dialogue concerning this topic between the Buddhist Hui Yan and the scholar He Chengtian , see Hui Jiao's (497–554) *Gaoseng zhuan* , in *Gaoseng zhuan beiji* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991), 1:47.

Through Yoshikawa Tadao's analysis,⁷³ it becomes clear that, in Ge Hong's *Shenxian zhuan*, noon was the preferred time for Taoist adepts to perform Deliverance of the Corpse (*shijie*).⁷⁴ For instance, famous adepts such as Wang Fangping,⁷⁵ Ji Zixun,⁷⁶ Dong Feng⁷⁷ and Ge Xuan⁷⁸ all "departed to Heaven at noon" (*rizhong dangfa*) and left their body as a useless "shell" (*quke*) in this world.

Thus noon was the critical moment for Taoist adepts to become immortals, and Yoshikawa Tadao explored other aspects of noon in Taoism also. For instance, it was cited as the critical moment for taking drugs,⁷⁹ for performing rituals,⁸⁰ the critical moment for immortals to descend to our world (*jiangzhen*),⁸¹ for conferring Heavenly Documents (*shou tianshu*),⁸² and for practicing various kinds of Taoist magic arts,⁸³ among other things.⁸⁴

Most of Yoshikawa Tadao's examples are from Six Dynasties sources, especially from the Liu Song and Liang dynasties, again corresponding to the historical backdrop of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*.

None of the characters in the story knows why the white ape always leaves his mountain home after noon, nor what he does when he is away, and of course we remain ignorant today. However, given that the sources make specific mention of the time, it is only reasonable, I believe, to interpret the white ape's timing as being in keeping with the intellectual atmosphere of the age.

V. The Sword, Incense and the Practice of Divination in Taoist Ideology

In our story the white ape has a pair of treasured swords (*baojian*), collects several *hu* of various kinds of incense () and reads books made of wooden slips (*mujian*). These three seemingly ornamental features help to form the Taoist ideological background that we have been discussing and reconstructing.

73 Yoshikawa Tadao's excellent study is extensively used in this paragraph. For details, see Yoshikawa Tadao, pp. 181-185.

74 This translation is borrowed from Henri Maspéro, 1981, p. 32. Kristofer Schipper's definition of *shijie* is slightly different. To him *shijie* means that "the sage himself had escaped from the world 'by means of his corpse', and obtained immortality," 1993, p. 182.

75 In *Shenxian zhuan*, see *Yingyin wenyuange sikuquanshu* (Taiwan photographic edition), 1059:269-272; also *Taiping guangji* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1959, and hereafter TPGJ), 1:7:45-48.

76 Ibid., 1059:293-295; also TPGJ 1:12:82-83.

77 Ibid., 1059:307-308; also TPGJ 1:12:83-85.

78 Ibid., 1059:290-296; also TPGJ 1:71:441-444.

79 The examples Yoshikawa Tadao uses are from Tao Hongjing, *Zhoushi mingrongji*, see DZ 16:152; and Wang Xuanhe, *Sandong zhunang*, see DZ 77:704.

80 Here, Yoshikawa Tadao's example is from Liu Dabin, *Maoshan zhi*, see DZ 17:153-158.

81 Yoshikawa Tadao uses an example from *Lishi shenxian tidao tongjian*, see DZ 15-16:139-148.

82 The example Yoshikawa Tadao uses is from Zhu Fa, *Yaoxin keyi jielü cao*, see DZ 22:204-207.

83 Yoshikawa Tadao uses many examples from different sources, see pp. 207-210.

84 Here I would like to add one aspect not covered by Yoshikawa Tadao: sword-casting (*zhujian*). In his *Baopu zu*, Ge Hong quoted from *Jinjian ji* indicating that Taoist swords should be cast on a certain day in the fifth month exactly at noon, see Wang Ming, 1980, pp. 281-282.

The sword played an important role in the development of Taoist thought from the Six Dynasties to the Tang. In his 1973 essay, Fukunaga Mitsuji reviewed the role of the sword in detail.⁸⁵

From the pre-Qin to the Han period the sword enjoyed an important position in Chinese culture.⁸⁶ Starting from the Three Kingdoms (220–280), according to Fukunaga Mitsuji, the sword began to acquire a divine power.⁸⁷ In the Jin dynasty, Ge Hong developed the concept of a Taoist treasured sword (*baojian* 寶劍).⁸⁸ A Taoist treasured sword with an astrological talisman (*tianwenzhihu* 天文支符) on it could repel harmful spiritual forces such as ghosts.⁸⁹ Ge Hong also quoted from *Jinjian ji*⁹⁰ about techniques for casting a pair of Taoist swords – one male and one female (*cixiong jian* 雌雄劍)⁹¹ – that had the power to conquer water demons (*shuijing* 水精).⁹² In the Liu Song dynasty, the concept of the treasured sword seemed to be even more widely accepted.⁹³

In the Liang dynasty, which is our story's historical backdrop, Tao Hongjing wrote *Gujin daojianlu* 古劍錄 and cast thirteen divine swords (*shenjian shisan kou* 神劍十三口) for Emperor Wu,⁹⁴ serving as a sign that the sword was further incorporated into Taoist ideology. This line of development reached a new stage under the early-Tang dynasty, again corresponding to the time the story was written. A landmark of this period was the composition of the great Tang dynasty Taoist Sima Chengzhen's *Shangqing hanxiang jiantu xu* 上清漢象劍圖序. This piece became a court phenomenon, eliciting a personal response from Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–755) himself.⁹⁵

In our story, in addition to swords, the white ape collects various kinds of incense, which also played an important role in ancient Chinese society in general and in Taoist ideology in particular. Fukatsu Tanefusa provides us with a systematic investigation on functions of incense in Chinese culture.⁹⁶ Many major ancient Chinese philosophical and literary classics

85 Fukunaga Mitsuji. "Dōkyō ni okeru kagami to ken" 道教における鏡と劍, *Tōhō Gakubō* 45 (1973), pp. 59-120.

86 For examples, see Fukunaga Mitsuji, pp. 59-120.

87 Fukunaga Mitsuji uses here both Cao Pi's (187–226) *Jianming* 劍明 and Cao Zhi's (192–232) *Baodao fu* 寶刀賦 as examples. Another major example he uses is the well-known story of "Zhang Hua and his Sword." For details, see Fukunaga Mitsuji, pp. 94-97.

88 The Taoist treasured sword became very important in later Taoist practices. Even today, *baojian* is a necessity for a Taoist in ritual ceremonies (*zuofa* 作法).

89 *Fujian* 寶劍 could mean either "sword of talisman" or "sword as talisman," see Wang Ming, 1980, p. 162 and p. 308. Cf. Fukunaga Mitsuji, p. 99.

90 The text itself is lost, though portions are preserved in *Baopu zi*.

91 The idea of *cixiong jian* here is obviously derived from Zhao Ye's *Wuyue chunqiu* 五岳春秋. The author of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* is perhaps familiar with *Wuyue chunqiu*. I am not sure whether the "pair of swords" in the story also directly alludes to the *cixiong jian* idea, but such a possibility exists.

92 See Wang Ming, 1980, pp. 281-282. Cf. Fukunaga Mitsuji, p. 100.

93 In addition to *Xijing zuji* 西經子, examples can be found in Liu Jingshu's *Yizuan* 易纂. See Fukunaga Mitsuji, p. 92.

94 Fukunaga Mitsuji, p. 92 and p. 60.

95 Fukunaga Mitsuji, pp. 59-72.

96 See Fukatsu Tanefusa's "Kodai chūgokujin no shisō to seikatsu – kaori ni yoru harai ni tsuite" 古代中国の香と清浄 – 香の持つ除穢の意義について, *Nishō-Gakusha University: Orientalism Research Institute Miscellany* 15 (1984), pp. 41-70.

– for instance, *Shang shu* (商書), *Shi jing* (詩經), *Analects* (*Lunyu* 論語), *Meng zi* (孟子), *Guan zi* (管子), *Hanfei zi* (韓非子), *Huainan zi* (淮南子), *Chu ci* (楚辭), and *Shanbai jing* (山海經) – all cite incense as an important means of purification against evil spirits.⁹⁷ Most of the types of incense mentioned – never fancy or exotic – were based on plants,⁹⁸ such as ginger (*jiang* 薑), fragrant thoroughwort (*lan* 蘭), Chinese onion (*cong* 蔥) and Chinese mugwort (*ai* 艾).

From the Six Dynasties through to the Tang, the importance of incense was incorporated into Taoist ideology. On the one hand, indigenous plant and mineral based incenses such as calamus (*changpu* 常蒲), chrysanthemum (*jubua* 菊華) and realgar (*xionghuang* 雄黃) continued to be used frequently by Taoists as means of purification.⁹⁹ On the other hand, exotic incenses (*anxixiang* 安息香, for instance) imported from remote countries were also used and formed a category known as *yixiang* 異香, usually containing a special protective power for those Taoist practitioners living in mountain grottos. This background information gives rich cultural clues that may help explain why the white ape collects various kinds of incense.

The white ape, who can predict his own death, not only collects incense but also reads books made of wooden slips. Whenever he finishes reading his books, the white ape carefully puts them under the stone stairs, and before his death these books are burned by a mysterious fire emanating from the stairs. While some of the books are perhaps Taoist manuals for inner chamber arts, others, I suspect, are Taoist divination books, since the white ape obviously knows the art of divination.¹⁰⁰

From the omen of the crescent moon and the mysterious fire under the stone stairs, the white ape knows in advance that a stranger will soon come from the outside world and kill him. This suggests that the white ape knows the secrets of astrological divination, in addition to other methods. Taoist astrological divination was popular during the Tang dynasty, as exemplified by the high Tang product *Kaiyuan zhanjing* (開元占經).¹⁰¹

The white ape also knows that his son will become famous in a sage king's court a few decades hence. It is likely that he knows the art of Taoist calendarology (*lizhan* 曆占) and the "selection of days" (*zeri* 擇日) method, which gradually matured through the Six Dynasties up to the high Tang.¹⁰² Through these divination activities a Taoist practitioner would certainly be able to tell the destiny of a newborn child.

In short, around the white ape protagonist we find Taoist flavors on various levels of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. Therefore, I would venture to argue here that this fictional white ape was created based on the model of a Taoist.

Based on the above explorations, it is now time to examine the relationship between Ouyang Xun's life and the story of the son in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. Such a synthesis will show how the concept of "historical referentiality" works in this particular text.¹⁰³

97 Ibid., pp. 41-52.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid.

100 Generally speaking, the secret of chamber arts was transmitted from the master to the disciple orally. Surviving written manuals were all very terse. An inner chamber arts practitioner did not have to often read the manual. A practitioner of divination, however, had to consult the books more frequently.

101 Marc Kalinowski's "La littérature divinatoire dans le *Daozang*," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989-1990), p. 103.

102 Cf. Marc Kalinowski, pp. 91-103.

103 For a detailed discussion on the concept "historical referentiality," see Jue Chen, 1997, pp. 1-64.

VI. The Geographical Location of Ouyang Xun's Home town

Ouyang Xun's home town was in Linxiang County of the Tanzhou Autonomous Prefecture during the Tang dynasty, which today is part of Hunan Province.¹⁰⁴ During the Liang dynasty, Linxiang was the capital of Changsha Prefecture, and concurrently that of Xiangzhou Autonomous Prefecture.¹⁰⁵

The genealogy of Ouyang Xun's family is as follows: his father was Ouyang He, and his grandfather was Ouyang Wei. Ouyang Wei's father was Ouyang Sengbao and his grandfather was Ouyang Jingda.¹⁰⁶ Both were minor autonomous prefecture officials of the Liang dynasty. At that time the Ouyang family belonged to a powerful clan of the Changsha Prefecture (*weijun baozu*).¹⁰⁷

Since antiquity the Changsha Prefecture had been the center for *Changshaman*, one of the four major southern *Man* minorities in medieval China.¹⁰⁸ *Changshaman* spread throughout the vast triangle of Changsha, Lingling and Guiyang Prefectures.¹⁰⁹ This area fell within Xiangzhou Autonomous Prefecture of the Liang dynasty and is today in the southern part of Hunan Province. In a north-south direction on the map, this larger triangle of prefectures in Xiangzhou geographically parallels that smaller triangle of counties – Guiyang, Yangshan and Quijiang (the capital of Shixing Prefecture) – in Hengzhou, where Lan Qin made his first southern expedition to pacify the *Man* minority. Ouyang Wei's own similar expedition after Lan Qin's death was to an area that happens to be the intersection of these two triangles: the border between Xiangzhou and Hengzhou of the Liang dynasty.¹¹⁰

Changshaman was the predominant ethnic minority occupying the area of these two triangles from the Southern Dynasties (420–589) to the Tang.¹¹¹ The legendary ancestor of *Changshaman* is a divine dog called Pan Hu,¹¹² the fullest version of whose story is in “Nanman xi'nanyi liezhuan” of *Hou Han shu*, compiled by the Liu

104 Linxiang County was located roughly in the suburbs of today's Changsha City. See *Hunan shengzhi* (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1961), p. 450.

105 Here I tentatively translate *jun* as “prefecture” and *zhou* as “autonomous prefecture.”

106 For both Ouyang Sengbao and Ouyang Jingda, no detailed biographical information is available from any of the pertinent dynastic histories.

107 See *Chenshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1972, and hereafter CS) 1:9:157-160; and *Nanshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975, and hereafter NS) 5:66:1613-1614.

108 The other three major kinds were *Wulingman*, living in the area of Wuxi (Five Brooks) – Xiongxi, Wuxi, Youxi, Yuanxi and Chenxi – corresponding to today's Hunan Province; *Lingjunman*, living in the area of Nanjun, Bajun and Jiangxia, corresponding to today's Sichuan and Hubei Provinces; and *Banshunman*, living in Bajun. For a discussion of these four major types, see Jiang Yingliang's *Zhongguo minzushi* (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1990), pp. 262-267.

109 Guiyang Prefecture of the Liang dynasty was in today's southern part of Hunan Province, while Guiyang County, part of the prefecture, is now in the northern part of Guangdong Province. The former belongs to the traditional geographical category of Xiang and the latter to that of Yue.

110 For details, see Jue Chen, 1996, pp. 83-89.

111 This statement is supported by both ancient records and the research of modern anthropologists.

112 In addition to *Changshaman*, Pan Hu has other kinds of *Man* minority descendants such as *Wulingman*, see below.

Song dynasty historian Fan Ye (398–445) only a few decades earlier.¹¹³ The story reads as follows:

114

In the past, Gaoxin Shi was invaded by Quanrong. The king was disturbed by the violent invasion but could not overcome it. The king made the following edict known to the whole world: Anyone who could behead General Wu of Quanrong would be awarded one thousand *yi* of gold, be given territories with ten thousand families, and be married to the young Princess. At that time, the king owned a dog called Pan Hu whose coat was made of five different colours.

After the edict was publicized, Pan Hu came to the Palace holding a person's head in its mouth. The subjects were surprised and on examining the head, found that it was General Wu's. The king was overwhelmed with joy. But obviously a dog was not supposed to be married to a Princess or given a substantial parcel of land. The king wanted to reward Pan Hu for his contribution but did not know what the reward should be. Then, the Princess heard the whole story: she felt that her father should not break a king's promise and she asked to be married to Pan Hu. The king had no choice and had his daughter marry Pan Hu.

Pan Hu carried the Princess into the Southern Mountains and arrived at a stone hall on a place so precipitous that no human had ever set foot on it. Then, the Princess took off her robe, made knots of *pujian* and wore clothes of *duli*.¹¹⁵

The king was sad. He missed his daughter and sent out envoys to find her. However, the envoys encountered ghastly winds and dark rains and were not able to proceed. In the course of three years, the Princess gave birth to twelve children, six boys and six girls.

When Pan Hu died, these children married each other. They used bark to make clothes, embellished with grasses and nuts. They liked colourful clothes and always cut them out to suggest the shape of a tail. Years later, the Princess returned home and told the whole story to the king.

Then, the king asked the Princess to bring all her children down to the human world. (...)

The descendants of these children are today's *Changshaman* and *Wulingman*.

113 Ban Gu's (32–92) *Han shu* was taken as a model by historians in the Tang Dynasty, see David McMullen, *State and Scholars in Tang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 163–168. Although *Hou Han shu* was less prestigious in Tang people's minds, it was seriously studied and annotated. The authoritative commentary of *Hou Han shu* was done by a group of historians during the reign of Emperor Gaozong headed by Li Xian, the crown prince between 675 and 680, see also McMullen, p. 174.

114 *Hou Han shu* 10:76:1829–1830. As a legend, the earliest record of the Pan Hu story is found in *Fengsu tongyi* by Ying Shao of the Eastern Han dynasty. In the Eastern Jin dynasty, versions of the legendary Pan Hu story can be found in Guo Pu's (276–324) *Shanhai jing zhu* and *Xuanzhong ji*; and there is also an elaborated version in Gan Bao's *Soushen ji*, which is very close in wording to the *Hou Han shu* version. As a historical record, an earlier documentation of the Pan Hu story is in Gan Bao's *Jin ji* before *Hou Han shu*. For details about the textual evolution of this story, see Wu Yongzhang's, *Zhongguo nanfang minzu wenhua yuanshi* (Nanning: Guangxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991), pp. 343–347.

115 According to Li Xian, the meaning of *pujian* and *duli* here was even not understood by the Tang people. See *Hou Han shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1965) 10:86:1289–1290.

This version of the Pan Hu story was widely accepted by the majority of Tang historians and literati as historical fact.¹¹⁶ It seems that *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* shares many elements with that text, on several narrative levels. First, the Southern Mountain (*nanshan*) holds an archetypal position here in a series of related texts: in *Jiaoshi yilin* an ape from the Southern Mountain steals a charming concubine;¹¹⁷ in *Bowu zhi* the ape who steals women is from the southwestern mountains of the Shu region;¹¹⁸ in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* the white ape carries Ouyang He's wife to a southern mountain; and in *Hou Han shu* Pan Hu carries the Princess off to the Southern Mountain.

Second, the stone hall here serves as a locus of archetypal power. This concept was closely shared by Man minorities in the Ba and Shu mountainous regions and Zhang Ling's Celestial Master Taoism as early as the Eastern Han dynasty.¹¹⁹ According to the Tang dynasty historian Li Xian,¹²⁰ the stone hall of Pan Hu was on Wu Mountain, located in the west of Lu Xi in Chenzhou Autonomous Prefecture (in today's Hunan Province).¹²¹ The description of the stone hall in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* has a similar resonance to the Taoist mountain utopia idea discussed earlier, incorporating them both into a new synthetic discourse of conscious fiction.

Third, the motif of children holds a strong position in both *Hou Han shu* and *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. The same is true for the "returning (*gui*) of the woman" motif. Fourth, three key situational descriptions in the above quote of *Hou Han shu* (*suochu xianjue*, *renji buzhi* and *jengyu zhenhui*) seem also to have their textual equivalents in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* (*cishan fujue*, *weichang yourenzhi* and *yinfeng huipei*).

In addition to the above points, the Pan Hu story reveals an ethnic fact important to our understanding of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*: the ancestor or totem of *Changshaman* is a dog.¹²² On the one hand, anthropologists in Man minority studies have confirmed that within the tribes of *Changshaman* and *Wulingman* the dog was always an object of worship and was never eaten as food. On the other hand, cultural historians have told us that the

116 The most enthusiastic opponent of the Pan Hu theory was the Tang dynasty historian Du You (735–812). In Chapter 187 of his *Tongdian*, Du You provided cogent arguments to the effect that the whole story was a Qin or Han Dynasty forgery, see *Yingyin wenyuange sikuquanshu*, 605:569. Cf. Wu Yongzhang, p. 346.

117 *Jiaoshi yilin* contains a simplified version of the story, which has only eight characters: *Nanshandajue daowomeijie* (The ape from the Southern Mountain stole my charming concubine). For *Jiaoshi yilin*'s position in Taoist literature, see Marc Kalinowski, 1989–1990, pp. 86–87.

118 See Pan Ning's *Bowuzhi jiaozheng* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980).

119 See Miyakawa Hisayuki, pp. 1–22. Although the minorities in the Ba and Shu regions were not *Changshaman*, they had an association with *Wulingman* (Pan Hu is the ancestor of both *Wulingman* and *Changshaman*). For details, see Miyakawa Hisayuki, pp. 8–9.

120 As we have pointed out earlier, Li Xian was the crown prince as Empress Wu gradually gained power in the court. Therefore it seems likely that there was a substantial connection between Li Xian's version of the Pan Hu story and the anonymous author's composition of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. For more detailed discussions, see below; and for more information concerning Li Xian's political career, see R.W.L. Guisso, *Wu Tse-t'ien and the Politics of Legitimation in Tang China* (Bellingham: Western Washington University, 1978), pp. 23–24.

121 *Hou Han shu* 10:86:2830.

122 In ancient sources, the descendants of Pan Hu are thus called *Pan Hu zhong* or *quanzhong*, meaning "offspring of the dog."

ancient custom of eating dogs among the Han majority was eliminated during the medieval epoch (from the Wei and Jin to the Tang), mainly because of the invasion of “barbarian cultures” (*bushu* 胡俗) and the spread of Buddhism.¹²³ In short, the historical fact is that people generally did not eat dogs in either the Liang or the Tang dynasties.

Given this, it seems incongruous that the white ape in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* “was especially crazy for dogs, liking to eat their flesh and drink their blood” (*youshiquan ju’eryingixue* 尤嗜犬茹噉猩猩血). In addition, throughout history I have failed to find any examples of apes eating dogs.

My theory for this anomaly is that the anonymous author of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* likely knew not only the geographical location of Ouyang Xun’s home town and its ethnic implications, but also the Pan Hu story in its cultural context. Driven by the motivation of *yingshe*, he dyed the white ape protagonist an anti-Pan Hu colour for reasons beyond the grasp of modern readers.

VII. Ouyang Xun’s Career as a Calligrapher

The roots of Ouyang Xun’s calligraphical style go back to the Six Dynasties. In the history of Chinese calligraphy the Six Dynasties was a crucial period during which the three major scripts – *caoshu* 草書, *xingshu* 行書, and *kaishu* 隸書 – were fully established.¹²⁴ The great Eastern Jin dynasty master Wang Xizhi (321–379 or 303–361) was fluent in all three scripts. His influence over Tang calligraphers was such that he became a model. Xu Hao

(703–782), in his *Shulun* 書論, traced the debts of three early Tang master calligraphers to Wang Xizhi: “Those who say that Yü Shih-nan has the muscle [*jīn* 筋] of Wang Hsi-chih, that Ch’u Sui-liang has Wang’s flesh [*rou* 肉], and that Ou-yang Hsün has Wang’s bone [*gu* 骨] are perfectly right.”¹²⁵

Of these three styles, the regular script served as the preferred style for Tang classicism.¹²⁶ Jean François Billeter summarizes the general development of regular script from Wang Xizhi to the Tang as follows:

The regular script attained an initial perfection in the fourth century, notably with Wang Hsi-chi (321–379, Eastern Chin). It went on developing under the North and South dynasties (420–581), a period when it inspired a remarkable diversity of stylistic variations. (...) After the reunification of the empire under the Sui (581–618), the great early T’ang masters (among others, Ou-yang Hsün, 557–641; Yü Shih-nan, 558–638; Ch’u Sui-liang, 596–658) gave it a durable, classical form. Other well-known T’ang calligraphers (in particular Yen Chen-ch’ing, 709–785, and Liu Kung-ch’üan, 778–865) helped to augment its expressive range, but without modifying its structure. It was the T’ang calligraphers who finally established the classical technique. This codification of the written forms and the writing technique corresponded to the requirements of the imperial administration which attained an unprecedented degree of complexity and centralization under the T’ang. (...) Fixed at the beginning of the T’ang dynasty, the regular remained the standard script

123 For a detailed discussion, see Zhu Yinlong 朱寅龍, “Guangxi chi gourou fengxi kaoyuan” 廣西馳狗肉風習考源, *Yiwenzhi* 藝文志 2 (1983), pp. 265–271.

124 Throughout this section, I have comprehensively consulted European sinologists’ points of view. For details, see below.

125 Jean François Billeter, *The Chinese Art of Writing* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), p. 203.

126 See Jean François Billeter, p. 35.

in China; it was not modified until the introduction of simplified characters in the People's Republic in 1956.¹²⁷

In the Wang Xizhi tradition, while the cursive script was often used to write letters, the regular script was reserved for more serious works such as “texts with Taoist content or Taoist connotations.”¹²⁸ The famous example is Wang's copying of the *Huangting jing* in regular script, which became a model for calligraphers in later centuries.¹²⁹

Lothar Ledderose points out that Taoism had played an important part in Wang's family history, his calligraphy and his life in general.¹³⁰ One clearly sees this connection if one puts Wang Xizhi's calligraphic art in the context of the Mao Shan revelation, which was developed by the mystic Yang Xi (330–?) and systematized by the Taoist master Tao Hongjing in his monumental *Zhen Gao*. According to the legend of the Mao Shan revelation, heavenly maidens visited Yang Xi at night and used his hand to write down the Taoist texts they conferred to our world. The first draft, which Yang Xi wrote in trance, was often in cursive script difficult for ordinary people to recognize. He rewrote the text later in regular script so it could be read more easily. This echoes the Taoist tradition of planchette writing, still alive today, in which the calligrapher serves as a medium communicating between this world and the other.¹³¹

Wang Xizhi and Yang Xi were both influential calligraphers during the period when the three types of script achieved their final formulation. The fact that the regular script was obviously more solemn explains why Wang Xizhi copied *Huangting waiying jing* and Yang Xi copied *Huangting neiyang jing* in regular script without prior agreement. It also explains why their styles for these two particular pieces were so similar in their strong Taoist flavour. Finally, I would like to emphasize that this period in Chinese calligraphical history falls into the reign of Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty – the backdrop for *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*.¹³²

127 Ibid., p. 76. The perfection of forms produced by the Tang regular script masters reflected the perfection of order that the emperor was supposed to have brought about. For instance, Ouyang Xun's *Jiuchengong liqunming* reflected the perfection of order during the Zhenguan reign of the early Tang (*zhenguan zhizhi*) and Yan Zhenqing's (709–785) *Da Tang zhongxing song* reflected the spirit of the restoration of the Tang house after the An Lushan (?–757) rebellion from 755 to 757, see Billeter, p. 102. Even today, the calligraphical apprenticeship always begins with the regular script done by the Tang masters; among them Ouyang Xun, Yu Shinan (558–638), Chu Suiliang (596–658?), Yan Zhenqing, and Liu Gongquan (778–865) are the most popular models. Cf. Billeter, pp. 111–112.

128 Lothar Ledderose, “Some Taoist Elements in the Calligraphy of the Six Dynasties,” *T'oung Pao* 70.4–5 (1984), p. 250.

129 Wang Xizhi's three best extant regular script examples are *Yue Yi lun*, *Huangting jing* and *Dongfang Shuo huazan*. The texts of the latter two are either Taoist classics or have a Taoist flavour. For the relevance of *Huangting jing* to our study of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*, see Section II above. Under the Tang, the regular script was used to write not only Taoist texts but also Confucian and Buddhist ones.

130 Ledderose, pp. 248–251.

131 Rolf A. Stein points out that the practice of planchette writing in China can be found in literary sources as early as in the sixth century. See “Un exemple de relations entre Taoïsme et Religion Populaire,” in Fukui Kôjûn hakase shôju kinen Tôyô bunka ronshû (Tokyo: Waseda daigaku, 1969), p. 84. Such a practice can be seen in Chinese communities everywhere in the world, even today.

132 It was during the Liang dynasty under Emperor Wu's enthusiastic promotion that calligraphy first became an imperially recognized art. Tao Hongjing was regarded by art historians as the earliest connoisseur of calligraphy and Emperor Wu as the first royal collector of calligraphical pieces. This cultural background is crucial to our

Now let us come back to the early Tang period, when Ouyang Xun lived and worked. As a government-supported religion, Taoism generally predominated over Buddhism in the Tang dynasty, particularly before the reign of Empress Wu, and in the high Tang under Emperor Xuanzong. Calligraphy was regarded as an important mode of expression of the time, and it was customary for eminent calligraphers to promote the religious school of their choice (or by an imperial order) by writing or copying favorable essays. Examples are Chu Suiliang's calligraphy of Emperor Gaozong's (r. 650–683) *Shu sanzang shengjiaoxu ji*,¹³³ promoting Buddhism, and Yan Zhenqing's composition and calligraphy of *Magu xiantan ji*,¹³⁴ promoting Taoism, both in regular script.¹³⁴

As a calligrapher, Ouyang Xun's contribution to the promotion of Taoism was enormous. However, this fact has not yet caught the attention of *chuanqi* critics, nor has it been applied to the interpretation of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* in a direct way. In the second month of the ninth year of the Wude reign (626), Ouyang Xun executed in regular script *Da Tang Zongshengguan ji*, a record of the Taoist temple Zongshengguan, under the imperial order of Emperor Gaozu (r. 618–626).

The temple Zongshengguan, also known as Louguan, is located at the foot of Zhongnan Mountain in Zhouzhi County of today's Shanxi Province. In the Wei and Jin period a school of Taoism arose in Louguan known as the Louguan School.¹³⁵ According to this school, Louguan was originally the house of Yin Xi in the Western Zhou dynasty (1045 BC? to 771 BC). This house was recognized as a sacred place because Lao Zi had visited Yin Xi there, where he wrote the famous *Daode jing*. Yin Xi was the Officer of the Hangu Pass, beyond which lay the uncivilized area of the West, in contrast to the Central Kingdom – China, inhabited by barbarians. After the two men met, Lao Zi took Yin Xi out through the Hangu Pass to convert the “barbarians” (*hu*). When they went to India, Buddha was reportedly converted into a Taoist disciple.¹³⁶

Tang dynasty emperors claimed Lao Zi as their ancestor and thus encouraged worship of him. As an important part of that worship, Emperors Gaozu and Xuanzong in particular enthusiastically promoted the Louguan School. In 619 Emperor Gaozu conferred two hundred *qing* of land to the Louguan temple, partly in response to the prophecy made by the Louguan Taoist Qi Hui in 618, the last year of the Sui Dynasty, predicting that Li Yuan, the then Duke of Tang, would become the first emperor of a prosperous new

understanding of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. In the story, the white ape predicted that Ouyang Xun would win national fame for his calligraphy. It would not have been possible for anyone to make such a prophecy before the Liang dynasty because no calligraphers had ever won such high respect.

133 Emperor Gaozong wrote this essay when he was the crown prince. Chu Suiliang's calligraphy was executed in 653 and known also as *Yanta shengjiao xu*.

134 *Magu xiantan ji* was executed in 771 during the Dali reign (766–779) of Emperor Daizong (r. 763–779).

135 For a general history of the Louguan School, see Chen Guofu, “Louguan kao” in his *Daozang yuanniu kao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1963), pp. 261–266.

136 This story served as the backbone for the Taoist “converting the Buddha” or *huabu* theory, which was systematized by the Western Jin dynasty Taoist Wang Fu when the famous *Huabu jing* was composed. The Louguan School firmly believed in this *huabu* theory. Of course, this entire pre-Wei and Jin history of Louguan was created and published by Louguan Taoists between the Six Dynasties and the Tang. For a brief pre-Wei and Jin history of Louguan School, see Ren Jiyu, *Zhongguo daojiao shi* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin, 1990), pp. 219–236.

dynasty.¹³⁷ In 620 Emperor Gaozu renamed the Louguan temple Zongshengguan, the “Temple to Honor our Sage Ancestor Lao Zi,” by giving a tablet to the temple (*cí'è* 祠額).

In 624 Emperor Gaozu visited the temple in person. His promotion of the Louguan School reached its climax when a stele of *Da Tang Zongshengguan ji*, inscribed in the calligraphy of the prestigious Ouyang Xun,¹³⁸ was established in 626. Due to the renaming of the temple and the establishment of the stele, the Louguan Taoist temple was in a certain sense converted into an imperial family temple of the Tang rulers.¹³⁹

Although Ouyang Xun was by and large a Confucian scholar official, he was deeply involved in early Tang support for the Louguan School and temple, as part of the imperial promotion of Taoism over Buddhism. This involvement could well have engendered bad feeling among contemporary Buddhists and their allies in the court, and I suspect that the anonymous author of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was one of these. Such antipathy would help explain why the white ape was portrayed as an animal Taoist.

VIII. The White Ape Animal Lore under the Tang

The first generation of critics of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was intellectuals of the Song dynasty. From their perspective, an ape was a base animal in Chinese lore. They therefore saw the story as an attack designed to insult the Ouyang family. This view has generally been adopted by critics of later generations also.

However, Ouyang Xun's early Tang encyclopedia, *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 seems to tell a different story. In *Yiwen leiju* the category of ape or *yuan* 猿 is contrasted with that of monkey or *mihou* 猕猴: the former is portrayed as a lofty gentleman while the latter symbolizes a form of low-life.¹⁴⁰ From the Six Dynasties through to the early Tang the ape was considered a good animal, and was even one of the sacred animals in Taoist legends. The ape was often closely associated with the crane (*he* 鶴): together they were a pair of animals sacred to Taoist adepts.¹⁴¹ In *Yiwen leiju*, Ouyang Xun quotes from Ge Hong: “During the Zhou dynasty King Mu's southern expedition, the whole army was transformed: gentlemen transformed into apes and cranes while low-lives transformed into insects and grains of sand” (*zhoubumuwang nanzheng yijun jiebua junzi weiyuan weibe xiaoren weichong weisha* 周伯陵王南征一軍皆化君子為猿為鶴小人為蟲為沙).

137 In Xie Shouhao 謝守浩, *Hunyuan shengji* 混元聖紀, see DZ 60:553. After Qi Hui made the prophecy he changed his name to Pingding 平定, meaning “peaceful and stable.”

138 Ouyang Xun and Yu Shinan were equally well known as calligraphers to their contemporaries but Ouyang Xun was more highly favored by Emperor Gaozu.

139 For a detailed discussion of these events, see Otogi Hajime 大谷 昌弘, “Tōdai rōkankō – Ōyō Jun sen ‘DaiTō sōseikanki’ no hi o tegakari to shite” 唐代樓觀考 – 歐陽詢撰《大唐宗聖觀記》碑を手掛りとして, in Yoshihawa, 1992, pp. 275-322.

140 *Yiwen leiju* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1982), 2:95:1652-1654.

141 R.H. van Gulik, *The Gibbon in China: an Essay in Chinese Animal Lore* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), pp. 39-40 and 54-55. For Taoist implications of the crane in the Six Dynasties religious ideology, see Edward Schafer, “The Crane of Maoshan,” 1983, pp. 372-393; and for the Tang dynasty allegorical meanings of the same bird, see Madeline Spring, *Animal Allegories in T'ang China* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1993), pp. 11-48. A special note of gratitude is here delivered to Denis Twitchett, not only for his introducing to me van Gulik's book on the Chinese gibbon but also for his advice on the importance of zoological studies in the study of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*.

).¹⁴² The legend of King Mu has an indisputably strong Taoist flavour, though we will never know whether the white ape in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* is a descendant of one of these “transformed gentlemen” who participated in King Mu’s southern expedition. The black leopard (*xuanbao*) was also frequently paired with the white ape, as indicated in *Yiwen leiju*.¹⁴³ In Six Dynasties intellectual history the white crane and the black leopard were both considered divine animals with a Taoist flavour as well.

Monkeys and apes began to be recorded in the writings of men of letters as early as the Han dynasty. From the Han throughout the Six Dynasties to the early Tang a hierarchical distinction was generally made between these two sub-species.¹⁴⁴ I suspect that it was during the latter part of the early Tang period, when *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was supposed to have been written, that the distinction began to be blurred in the minds of Chinese literati. In the high Tang encyclopedia *Chuxue ji*, compiled by Xu Jian in Emperor Xuanzong’s reign, this distinction was no longer as clear as in *Yiwen leiju*, since the compiler put both sub-species under the category of *hou* or monkey.¹⁴⁵ A few decades later, in the mid-Tang encyclopedia *Baishi luntie shileiji*, compiled by Bai Juyi (772–846), the two sub-species were listed under the category of *yuan* or ape.¹⁴⁶ Of the four great encyclopedias of the Tang dynasty, three deal with animal categories emphatically, and a brief review shows that by the high Tang the concepts of monkey and ape seemed to be treated interchangeably.¹⁴⁷ Given this, I would venture to argue that *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was probably composed before the high Tang. In other words, it is very possible that the story was a product of the early-Tang.

Beyond these questions of intellectual history, there also exist real historical connections between the white ape in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* and real white apes. In ancient times the white ape was not only regarded as a precious rare species from the southern remote countries but was also seen as a symbol of good fortune.¹⁴⁸ In 508, the seventh year of the Tianjian reign (502–519) of the Liang dynasty, a white ape was sent as a special tribute to Emperor Wu from Fan Wenzan, then King of Linyi State in the remote southern area. This animal was so novel in the Liang court that it occasioned a phenomenal interest, as was recorded in several dynastic histories.¹⁴⁹ The timing of this event was quite close to the Datong reign, the backdrop of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*, and it is not unlikely that the anonymous author of the story incorporated, consciously or unconsciously, this historical event into his

142 *Yiwen leiju* 2:95:1653. The legend of King Mu occupies a subtle but visible position in the post-Han Taoist ideological formative years. In the same period the crane became a symbol for Highest Clarity Taoism in Mao Shan during the Six Dynasties.

143 *Yiwen leiju* 2:95:1653.

144 For a detailed survey of the topic, see R. H. van Gulik, 1967, pp. 45–76.

145 *Chuxue ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 3:29:720–722.

146 *Baishi luntie shileiji* (Taipei: Xinxing, 1962), 3:1084.

147 Although these encyclopedias cannot be taken as a sole and absolute base for statistics, they do reveal some truth concerning the blurring of the distinction between ape and monkey under the Tang.

148 *Yiwen leiju* quotes from *Shanhai jing* (*tangting zhishan fashuang zhishan qishang duobaiyuan*) and from *Lishi chunqiu* (*jingwang youshen baiyuan*), all indicating the rareness and remoteness of this sub-species. See *Yiwen leiju* 2:95:1653.

149 *Liangshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973, and hereafter LS), 1:2:50, 3:54:786–787; and Zhu Mingpan, *Nanchao Liang huiyao* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1984) p. 593.

fiction. In short, the white ape protagonist has significant implications in the history of the Liang dynasty. These implications, I believe, are related to white ape animal lore in medieval China synthesized in Ouyang Xun's *Yinwen leiju*.

In addition to the social and intellectual environment reconstructed above, the Tang rulers' political attitude towards Taoism is crucial to our understanding of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. Generally speaking, Taoism was the state religion under the Tang, holding a position over both Confucianism and Buddhism. The major exception was under the reigns of Empress Wu,¹⁵⁰ whose maternal family had had an association with Buddhism for several generations.¹⁵¹ Since the Confucian tradition by nature denies the validity of women as rulers, and Lao Zi was regarded as the ancestor of the Tang emperors, Empress Wu was generally alienated from and opposed by the advocates of both Confucianism and Taoism on her road to the throne.¹⁵² In contrast, Buddhists helped her materially in legitimizing her rule of the country by claiming her as the bodhisattva, a cakravartin ruler, and the future Buddha, Maitreya.¹⁵³ Among other auspicious omens "discovered" by her supporters (including Buddhist monks), the re-edited *Dayun jing* served as a major justification for Empress Wu to rule China according to the word of Buddha.¹⁵⁴

In return for the crucial support offered by Buddhists over the years on her path to the throne, Empress Wu promoted Buddhism step by step to the position of state religion to replace Taoism. Her first decisive step was in the eighth month of 674¹⁵⁵ when "an edict was issued, nominally by Kao-tsung, decreeing that henceforth in all religious ceremonies, both public and private, the Buddhist and Taoist clergies would stand on equal footing, neither taking precedence over the other."¹⁵⁶ Throughout the entire Tang period, conflicts between Buddhists and Taoists never ceased. The core of these conflicts was the desire to obtain imperial favour, and until 674 Taoists generally won the battle.¹⁵⁷ Bearing in mind this historical context, we can understand the psychological weight an edict might have carried.

The second step taken by Empress Wu was in the fourth month of 691 when "an imperial edict formally ranked Buddhism above Taoism, thereby reversing the policy of the three preceding T'ang emperors, and ordered that henceforth Buddhist monks and nuns should take

150 For a general political and cultural picture of Empress Wu's reign, see R. W. L. Guisso, "The Reigns of Empress Wu, Chung-tsung and Jui-tsung (684–712)" in Ed. Denis Twitchett, *Cambridge History of China*, vol.3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1979), pp. 290–332.

151 For a general discussion of this aspect, see Chen Yinke, "Wu Zhao yu fojiao", *Academia Sinica Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology* 5.2 (1935), pp. 138–144.

152 For space reasons, I have summarized the general situation in a simplified way. For a sophisticated analysis of Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist ideology in Empress Wu's court, see R. W. L. Guisso, 1978, pp. 26–50 and 66–69. Cf. Kenneth K. S. Ch'en, *Buddhism in China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 220; and Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 37–47.

153 Stanley Weinstein, p. 41. Cf. Mark Edward Lewis, "The Suppression of the Three Stage Sect: Apocrypha as a Political Issue," in *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*. Ed. Robert Buswell (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 1990), p. 229.

154 Weinstein, pp. 41–43.

155 The eighth month of 674 also served as a landmark in Empress Wu's political career. In that month she "took a major step toward her goal of openly assuming power by adopting the unprecedented title T'ien-hou, 'Heavenly Empress,' following a serious illness of the Emperor during the preceding year;" see Weinstein, p. 39.

156 Ibid., p. 39.

157 For a brief but reliable account of these conflicts, see Ren Jiyu, 1990, pp. 265–274.

precedence over members of the Taoist clergy.”¹⁵⁸ Less than one year before that edict, “a group of ten Buddhist monks in the seventh month of 690” had presented “the Empress with a copy of the *Ta-yün ching*.”¹⁵⁹ The exchange of favors between the Buddhist clergy and the Empress was obvious. This latter edict ended an epoch of fifty-four years in which Taoists had enjoyed a favourable position.¹⁶⁰

This aspect of cultural history is directly relevant to our understanding of *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. The story was insulting to the Ouyang family for two reasons. First, because it asserts that Ouyang Xun’s father was an ape. Second, because it implies that Ouyang Xun’s father was a Taoist animal. Neither of these assertions need necessarily be defined as insulting per se, but they would have been seen as such in the particular historical period and cultural environment.

If *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* had been written during the Wude reign of Emperor Gaozu, when an ape was not a base animal at all and Taoism was in favor the story would not have been seen as particularly insulting. In this case, the *yingshe* or *roman à clef* would certainly have been missed its supposed target. I would therefore venture to speculate that *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was most likely composed during the reigns of Empress Wu in general and more specifically around 691. This was the period during which the ape became “downgraded” in the Chinese mind, and when Taoism fell from favor in the court as well as in society at large.

In 691, Ouyang Tong , son of Ouyang Xun, was promoted to play a major part in the central administration. Only a month or so later he was falsely charged and executed by Lai Junchen (651–697). The reason for his downfall was that he firmly disagreed with the proposal to confer the title of Heir Apparent (*huangsi*) upon Wu Chengsi (?–698), Empress Wu’s eldest nephew.¹⁶¹ I believe this adds further weight to my theory that *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan* was possibly composed around this eventful year, 691.

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This analysis reveals an important fact: there exist two hidden centers of information in *Bu Jiang Zong baiyuan zhuan*. One is the Liang dynasty center of information related to the backdrop of the story; the other is the early Tang dynasty center of information associated with the date the story was written. The process of interaction and combination of information from these two centers has to a large extent shaped the course of our story’s narrative.

158 Weinstein, p. 43. For the text of the edict “Shijiao zai daofa zhi shangzhi” , see Song Minqiu, *Tang da zhao ling ji* (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1992), p. 538; and for the implications of this edict the Tang cultural history, see Chen Yinke, pp. 146–147.

159 Weinstein, p. 41.

160 It was Emperor Taizong’s edict of 637 that officially established the precedence of Taoism over Buddhism. See Chen Yinke, pp. 146–147.

161 See *Jiu Tangshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 15:189:4947–4948 and *Xin Tangshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 18:198:5646; and see also Guisso, 1978, p. 291.

Yingshe literally means “shooting or casting a shadow.”¹⁶² How to create a shadow to shoot? The question is a primary concern for traditional Chinese fiction writers in this genre. A shadow may not be created on impulse: there are certain principles and methods that must be followed. These principles and methods, in my opinion, are far more complicated than the simple referential formula “A in reality equals B in fiction.” Not only are parallelism and metaphor involved in the process, but there are also calculated anachronisms, textual building blocks, and circumstantial details.¹⁶³

The result of the active participation of these techniques brings circumstantial elements of a certain historical moment vividly into the reader’s vision and therefore gives the story a look of flesh and blood. With the passage of time, the reader of later generations may no longer care about the question of who in history was the target of insinuation. Rather, what attracts the modern audience is the lively self-contained fictive world created and the way its historical analogy echoes in his/her deep memory with the collective unconscious inherited from his/her ancestors.

This is how *yingshe* works here in our story.

162 Jue Chen, “Shooting Sand at People’s Shadow’: *Yingshe* as a Mode of Representation in Medieval Chinese Literature”, *Monumenta Serica*, 47 (1999): 169-207.

163 See Jue Chen, 1997.